

COLUMBIA RECORD

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DRY LAW BRINGS NEW PHASE.

That prohibition and the negro question have presented a problem to the churches of America which must be met with a new note of certainty of conviction that the old, old story of sin and salvation, of repentance and a change of heart, of helpless men seeking the redeeming Christ of the unshaken Cross, is the opinion of a Georgia minister recently expressed in the press. Just returned from an extended visit to the North and East, where he was in close contact with the negro problem as it is affected by the dry law, this Georgia divine says:

"The last five years of war and reconstruction have brought two permanent problems to the Northern States, the negro and the liquor problems. When the big munition factories began to offer fabulous prices for any kind of workmen, whether of poor or efficient capacity, the negro swarmed out of the Southern cities and cotton fields to the new El Dorados of the Northern cities. Instead of his making good he proved in most cases incapable of the careful skill needed in the mathematical exactness required in the manufacture of war rifles and shells. Daily papers in the small towns would read frequently like this, 'Last week thirty Southern negroes were dismissed from the town factory for inefficiency.' Like rats swarming to the rubbish piles of the big cities' slums, these friendless, penniless, homesick Southern negroes found their way. Now the shortage in labor of all kinds finds these negroes sober and making wages by which they defy the cheap white laborers and demand equal rights in every social scale.

"Prohibition has cleaned up the tenderloin of the big cities. The slums of Philadelphia, according to the mission workers, are now sober and quiet and law abiding, but restless with a taste of large wages and full dinner pails. Philadelphia has a negro population of 200,000, a negro population as large as Atlanta, Savannah, Macon, Augusta and Columbus combined.

"These two problems in many cases find the churches of the North confronted by streets full of sober men brought about by prohibition but unfriendly to the church because for the last ten years the churches have been preaching a gospel of feeding the stomach and forgetting the soul. 'Soup and soap' has been the slogan to regenerate society and now

that prohibition has relieved the need for both, because the down and out have money, enough for soup and soap, it becomes the task of the churches that have failed to keep the fear of God as the beginning of wisdom in the first place, to sound a new note of certainty of its conviction that the old, old story of sin and salvation, of repentance and exchange of heart, of helpless man seeking the redeeming Christ of the unshaken cross, and to sound it with the blast of a trumpet, clear, clarion, unmuffled, thrilling, rousing, challenging, powerful, with the authority of the shout of the Eternal Voice of God; that is the solution of the confusion, the unrest, the uncertainties that threaten the Northern cities, especially, when social upheavals hint at social revolutions.

"The South has kept its balance by its churches, white and black, welcoming an authoritative note unapologetic. The Southern churches of all denominations have kept their high notes clear above the crowd's companions. They have thrust Jesus—living—in opinion—into the social problems of their time and He has triumphed."

STEWES FROM U. S. A.

Despite our illicit liquor traffic, our moonshine output and the extent to which our anti-prohibition element manages to violate our constitutional law and "get away with it," there is no doubt about the fact that the average American community is immeasurably more peaceful and orderly under existing conditions than was the rule before the country outlawed John Baileycorn.

The truth of this is emphasized by comparison of American cities under "dry" conditions with the capital of Cuba, that now is the Mecca of thousands of "wet" tourists from our shores.

At home the bibulously inclined Americans do, of course, drink to a certain extent—"when they can get it," as the common expression goes. But they are secretive in the indulgence of their liquor habit, doing their drinking surreptitiously, always making sure first that no policeman or possible informer is looking; and as a rule, the individual supply in hand is exhausted before its baneful effects attain the proportions of a wide-spread nuisance, as in the olden days, and our restaurants and cafes are now generally employed as places in which to eat and while away an hour without

either getting drunk or being annoyed by ribald drinkers.

According to all reports, Havana, Cuba, presents a striking contrast.

According to Nina Wilcox Putnam's account of the conditions in "wet" Havana, which appeared recently in the Saturday Evening Post—

"There is only one phrase which adequately expresses the emotion of the average decent tourist upon seeing the Havana cafes for the first time through the perspective which a year of American prohibition provides—absolutely shocking. And that is not intended as humor, either.

"It is not that these cafes, which occupy all the most prominent sites on every corner and along the side streets, are disorderly. They are not. If any disorder occurs—I say it with shame, mortification and regret—it is almost invariably Americans who make it. It is the mere fact of the existence of the saloon itself which is shocking. It looks sordid and ugly and—well, shocking. I can only say it again."

Cuba, of course, is harvesting large bales of American money by providing Americans facilities for gratification of their liquor habit; but that is not saying that Cubans generally are satisfied with conditions; for, this author goes on to say—

"The Cubans themselves are very temperate people. Time and again I have seen a group of Cubans or Spaniards sitting at a table with glasses of pineapple juice or delicious water ices made of their native fruits, seriously-occupied in political discussions and surrounded by tables of noisy Americans." * * *

"Here," she says, further on in her narrative—

"was the real thing. And though distinctly un-Cuban, mighty interesting for that very reason. The great American invasion was at its midnight headquarters. From 11 until dawn they sit and weep into their drinks while a quartet works in the closest possible harmony over the indisputable fact that 'No matter where I ro-ham, I want to go back home. If you're from Dixie—or Connecticut or East Aurora—

You'll under-sta-hand! 'Ain't it the truth, Mabel,' sobbed the lush nearest to us. 'But he did not add anything about his return ticket, and I felt no regrets at the omission.'"

Very probably the time is not far distant when the American "stew" will be no less unwelcome in Cuba than he is today in the United States under our eighteenth amendment; and in the meantime Cuba is welcome to all she may get from him.

Our people are better off without him, his debauchery and his nonsensical noise.

DRYNESS CAUSES CRUELTY TO WIVES AND TO CHILDREN

Chicago, November 13.—Statistics showing that complaints of cruelty to wife and children have increased 38 per cent since prohibition arrived, and more rapidly in the last six months than during the first half of the year, were given in the annual report of Albert E. Webster, superintendent of the Juvenile Protective association, made public today.

"Men who formerly drank heavily," the report reads, "have undergone a reaction, which expresses itself in surliness or abuse of the family."

Other classes of complaints also are shown to have increased. Juvenile delinquency has increased 40 per cent, complaints against disorderly houses, 80 per cent, or about 700 per cent over the war period, and complaints concerning runaway and immoral girls nearly 100 per cent, or 40 per cent more than during the war period.

On the other hand, it was shown that complaints of adult contribution to child delinquency on account of liquor have decreased 74 per cent since the eighteenth amendment went into effect, prosecutions for non-support have decreased 20 per cent, disorderly conduct charges have been cut in half and insanity complaints reduced 60 per cent.